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January-May 2019
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What gave you the
strength, faith, or
courage to heal your
grief after loss?

Please read our ELetter and pass it on!

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MY FIRST DEATH

by Bob Baugher on Sunday, July 23, 2017

His name was Donald and I first met him when he was 9 and I was 12. His was the first Black family to move into our Seattle neighborhood back in the late 1950s. I remember a man and his wife who had recently moved to our neighborhood from Mississippi—a nice couple—or so I thought until they put up a Confederate flag in their living room window a couple days after Donald and his parents moved in. I remember Donald as a gentle, sometimes sickly boy who worked hard at fitting in with the neighborhood children. After a year, he joined the local Cub Scout group where I assisted the Den Mother at the weekly meetings.

One summer day a few months after the Cub Scout meetings had begun, my family and I had just returned from a long drive to see our grandfather in Ohio when my mother shared some sad news that she had gotten from a neighbor: Donald had died. He had been sick and quickly succumbed to something called double pneumonia. Of course, we were all shocked. The next day, I was told there would be a funeral and that the Cub Scouts were invited. Only one of us had ever been to a funeral.

Two days later, six of us boys crammed into the back of a station wagon, and as kids often do, we nudged one another attempting to reduce our anxiety by joking

and laughing. One kid yelled out, "Who's going to sit next to Donald." And we all responded, "Not me. You do it!" When we arrived at the church, we were met with loud organ music and adult voices chatting softly. The smell of flowers was overwhelming. One of the wreaths said, "Beloved Donald."

We were escorted in and seated in the front row with Donald's open casket not more than a few feet away! There he was, the lifeless body of a young boy in a small casket. Needless to say, the joking had ceased the moment we left the station wagon. The sermon was long, punctuated at times with sudden loud exclamations of wailing and crying—something that sent chills through six wide-eyed Cub Scouts. The service ended with Donald's casket carried out of the building and into what I later realized was a hearse.

I don't remember much else of the service, but I do know that this first encounter with death as a young person provided me with lifelong lessons:

1. Kids can die—that means my other friends and me as well! Scary!
2. Dead bodies don't move. And, they look different from a sleep state.

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MY FIRST DEATH...

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3. There are cultural differences in expressions of grief.

4. Prior to attending a funeral, children need to be sat down and informed exactly what will happen—what they will see, hear, and smell. The explanation should be descriptive to the extent that there will be no surprises.

5. Following the funeral, there should be a debriefing so that each child can process what had transpired.

6. Discussion could include any feelings of guilt (“I regret teasing him so much”) or anger (“I’m mad at his parents. Didn’t they know he was sick?”).

7. In an ideal setting, it would have been helpful at the next Cub Scout meeting for each of us to write a note to Donald’s parents (I never spoke to them again—they moved a couple months later). Or perhaps the group could have made something to give to the family.

None of #4-7 took place for us bewildered kids. Of course, as they say, “That was then. This is now.” We now know much more about how to help a child cope with a death. My first experience, although sudden and personal, was not a traumatic event that has affected me



long term. I wonder how many children have grown to adulthood and are walking around today having never had the chance to work through an earlier death.

Several years ago, I volunteered once a week at a prison teaching inmates a num-

ber of psychology-related topics. I remember the evening I lectured on Death and Loss when I asked, “What kinds of loss have you experienced?”

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How to Connect with Wings:

- Email: nanwings1@gmail.com • Postal: P.O. Box 1051, Wausau, WI 54401 • Ph: 715.845.4159
- Follow the EVENTS calendar posted at the website wingsgrief.org
- Subscribe to the free online ELetter sent quarterly.
- Order a Free copy of Grief Digest at www.centeringcorp.com
- Visit Wings on Facebook



MY FIRST DEATH...

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Hands went up all over the room as they shared powerful stories of childhood trauma: “My father killed my mother. I was in my bed when it happened. I heard it.” “My sister died of a drug overdose.” “My little sister was run over by a car. I saw it.” “My mother died of cancer when I was 11. For years, I thought it was my fault.”

Looking back, I have never been in a room with so much loss. And I often wonder: Is it any coincidence that these guys ended up in prison?

I think of the millions of children throughout the world who will experience a significant, traumatic death this year. I hope that the adults around them will use the

knowledge we now have to help a young person cope with death. Otherwise, we are still back in the 1950s.

Published with permission from Bob Baugher.

LIFE LEGACY

*By Amy Kitsebel,
Bereavement Coordinator*

Legacy as defined by Webster’s Dictionary as something transmitted by or received from an ancestor or predecessor or from the past. In recent reflection and observation of life, it has become remarkable to see how those we love live on in their legacy.

Traditionally “legacy” refers to monetary gifting. For this reflection on legacy, I refer to the definition used secondarily in the dictionary as something received from someone. Something, I believe, is far more valuable than riches or things. It is the very way of being, Folks we love pass on traits to those of us living. I hear my Aunt’s laughter when her daughter laughs and revels in telling family stories. I taste grandma’s lemon poppy seed cake, when my mom cooks as the baker she taught my mom to be. My spouse gleefully shares the teasing antics he learned at the feet of his uncle and dad.

The people who may have been perfectionist’s pass along the wisdom to use as a level when you build- keeping us on the straight and narrow. Those with a less than ‘rule bound’ scope may encourage the adventure side of life that we brave to take on new adventures. The granddaughter who embodies her deceased grandma’s glean in her eye, or the way someone walks cues a memory of your brother’s saunter. A son suddenly constructing bird feeders after the death of his mom, in her honor, then finding glee in the finches she so adored coming to partake in the new hobby. He insightfully knows this keeps a bond with mom. I usually struggle with the concept “they are no longer with us.” I believe with a different lens we can see them everywhere: in nature, at the family gathering, in the community and mostly in our memories and hearts. Love never dies. Navigating life after the death of someone precious is often a bumpy road; however, may you find wisdom to notice the little joys in the everyday that may be part of their legacy. Life is complicated and precious and beautiful. In the grand scheme of things, our time on earth is very short. I strive to live in the present moment and to spend my time and energy doing the things that bring me joy. I eat delicious food and laugh with friends.

I hold hands with my husband on the streets of a foreign city. I lie in the warm grass with my granddaughter as we watch butterflies float through the air above us. It is true that there is great sorrow in this life, but it is equally true that there is great goodness. I choose to focus on those parts and express gratitude for it all.





LOOKING BACK... THE AWESOME POWER OF HOPE

NAN ZASTROW
Co-Founder,
Wings – A Grief Education Ministry

There is a quote that states “Don’t look back. You aren’t going that way.” That’s good advice for many circumstances in our lives. However, sometimes looking back is also a way to understand how far you’ve come; the accomplishments you’ve made especially under duress; and the power of “Hope” in becoming someone different than planned.

We just concluded the 25th anniversary of Wings™, our non-profit organization. It’s been a year of looking back and remembering, not with sadness, but rather with surprise and profound gratefulness for the support of family, friends, community, and even strangers as we traveled this journey after the death of our son, Chad, in April 1993. Looking back reminds us of the feeling that we didn’t think we could do it (move forward). Looking back reminds of the challenges, the emotional hard work, and the victories won!

Please bear with me while I regress and summarize a fraction of what we’ve learned.

Remembering the beginning:

Spring forced its way into Wisconsin in an unusual way in April, 1993. It strangely marked the day with headline news. “Blizzard”. It was Easter-time...a time when the sun

typically began warming the earth and tulips emerged. Outside my window a cherry tree with long, thin branches swayed in the wind. The branches loaded with spring buds supported dozens of plastic Easter eggs in bright colors suspended from ribbons. The sudden freezing rain and blizzard coated the branches heavily with ice causing them to strain and bend unbearably

tomorrow is molded by how we process the event, when the numbness subsides. Our son’s death, our darkest moment, became a turning point that changed who we were and created a life much different than we ever imagined.

Challenges:

My husband, Gary, my daughter, and I were left to survive an unimaginable



against the frozen weight. This bizarre scene mocked the event that had just unfolded...the death of our 21 year-old son, Chad, as the result of suicide. We tried to shake the icy chill that numbed our minds and bodies. How could this be happening to us? Ten weeks later, Chad’s fiancé took her life too.

In an instance, our lives changes forever. Sometimes who we were meant to be is changed by a memory from our darkest moment. Memories triggered by traumatic events change the way we think, act, and respond to future events. They can create either negative or positive reactions going forward. In most cases, we make a choice. What we become

absence in our lives. When life seemed almost perfect, suddenly we were challenged beyond the limits of our human understanding. Here are a few of the challenges:

- Faith. Our faith wavered with unanswered questions and triggered a new search for meaning.
- We lived with a stigma-related death in a time when death by suicide was silent.
- We challenged the statistics. So many people quoted the statistics about divorce among parents who lost a child. We wanted to show, by example, that the death of a child can also forge an

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unbreakable bond of communication, love, and marital commitment.

- Lack of knowledge about grief, unavailable resources (the Internet was newly born). Community resources were few. We struggled to learn what we needed to help us heal.
- Learning how loss of a sibling would affect our daughter with an intellectual disability and provide for her future needs.
- Returning to the workplace, managing productivity, dealing with inquisitive questions from coworkers, and finding motivation to excel when it didn't seem important anymore.
- Accepting that this death was something we could not control. We struggled with shoulda, woulda, coulda feelings of guilt until we realized that some things in life are not to be understood, but rather accepted.
- Restructuring family traditions long-term. Recognizing that this loss changed the way we practiced our traditions, and filled the gap created by death.
- Loss of dreams. Seeing family and friends living out their dreams through the lives of their children and grandchil-

dren. Then, realizing we would never have the opportunity to experience the same.

- Finding purpose. Purpose equals “future.” Without a vision of the future, there is no such thing as purpose.

How we healed our pain:

Here are my short answers to some of the items above that paved our path to healing.

- First, we let God in. After a brief period of anger and frustration with a loving God, we realized there is nothing stronger than faith to get you through.
- Stopping the silence about suicide became a passion. So often suicide is misunderstood and over-judged. We speak publicly about this and other related taboo deaths.
- Remembering who our son was, not how he died is our focus. Guilt implies “intent”. We adopted a “no fault” judgment regarding Chad’s death. We instinctively knew, without a doubt, that Chad did not intend to hurt us. Putting guilt aside was a simple choice.
- Continued education and learning about grief. This became a lifelong pur-

suit to help us deal with our own loss as well as help others.

- Providing educational opportunities to help people deal with uncertainty and live with a society that sometimes minimizes the impact of grief on someone’s life.
- Building a “different” life with different “dreams” and grasping joy wherever we could find it. Living in the present moment and not taking it for granted.
- Creating “purpose” through our grief ministry.

Our way to defeat the pain was to never forget.

We’ll never forget our darkest moment, but there are lessons to be learned from all life experiences. We still selfishly surrender to moments of sadness and tears. It is our legacy. However, choosing to be better rather than bitter was the right choice. The memory of our grief lives as our daily companion, but it is the healing that reigns. The dark moments become grayer and the sun shines brighter fading the pain of loss so we can live meaningful lives.

We will forever be amazed at the surprises that unfold because we are exactly where we are meant to be. God directs our paths. Our pursuit for peace evolved through action. Choosing to heal grief can challenge your life temporarily, but it will likely change your life forever. One nanosecond in time changed our lives forever. Looking forward is the key to surviving loss, but looking back is a requirement for discovering and acknowledging the awesome power of HOPE!

WHAT MY SON'S DEATH TAUGHT ME

*Written by Stephanie Darnell,
Wausau, WI*

Eleven years ago, my 18-year-old son Evan died by suicide. These are the six most important things I learned from his death:

1. I don't have control over other people and their choices, but I do have control over myself and my own choices. I'm not an all-knowing being and I wasn't able to prevent Evan's death. The pain and confusion I experienced in the aftermath nearly killed me, but I finally realized that how I move forward and heal is my responsibility. Evan's death is a part of my history, but it doesn't have to define my future.

2. I am resilient and capable. If I was able to survive my son's death and go on to thrive, what can't I do? I discovered a well of strength inside of me that I never imagined I had. With time, it has become a quiet confidence in myself and in life itself.

3. An open-mind is a powerful tool. I can use it to question my beliefs and imagine possibilities. "Who says a parent can't survive the death of a child?" "What if God is something different than I originally thought?" "Can something good really come from tragedy?" It takes courage to ask the big questions, grapple for the answers, and adjust your worldview accordingly, but I've learned that it's worth it.

4. Death is just a change of form. I no longer fear death or a place called hell. God is not interested in

punishing us or teaching us a lesson. God is pure love and only love is real. Everything else is an illusion.

5. I don't know what hidden pain others might be carrying. I do my best to extend compassion to those around me. I avoid judging others and instead send them love and light and strength as they find their way through this oftentimes difficult journey of life. It costs nothing to be kind.

6. Life is complicated and precious and beautiful. In the grand scheme of things, our time on earth is very short. I strive to live in the present moment and to spend my time and energy doing the things that bring me joy. I eat delicious food and laugh with friends.



I hold hands with my husband on the streets of a foreign city. I lie in the warm grass with my granddaughter as we watch butterflies float through the air above us. It is true that there is great sorrow in this life, but it is equally true that there is great goodness. I choose to focus on those parts and express gratitude for it all.

JANUARY - MAY 2019 Program Schedule

Wings—a Grief Education Ministry

Good Grief, Bad Grief - How Grief Changes Your Life (Education/Support Group)

Grief is not an event that begins and ends. It becomes a part of your life. It is an active, ongoing process of turning your sadness into a meaningful life again. Both good grief and bad grief can make an impact on your life, sometimes without you realizing it. Sometimes family and friends “just don’t get it” when it comes to the emotional turmoil you might be going through. This is a journey you do not need to face alone. Join us for this six week series to understand grief and learn coping skills as you move forward.

**Tuesdays, January 22, 29,
February 5, 12, 19, 26
6:00 - 7:30 p.m.**

Conference Room 0-850-2, Quality Services,
Aspirus Wausau Hospital

22nd Understanding Grief Seminars

Two seminars for the bereaved and caregivers. Watch or call for details in February/March.

Invited Professional Speaker: Ted Bowman

Holiday Inn & Suites,
1000 Imperial Avenue, Rothschild

Open to the Public. Everyone is welcome to attend both programs. CEUs available for professionals.

Thursday, April 4 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Shattered Dreams, Resiliency—Finding Hope, a community program for grieving families. No charge. Registration not required.

Friday, April 5 9:00 a.m. - Noon Cost: \$50

**Grief and Hope in Life’s Intersections:
Multiple Responses to Immediate and
Chronic Sorrow**

Pre-registration recommended or register at the door.

Finding The Other Side Of Sadness: Living The New Normal After Loss (Education/Support Group)

This four-week series is a second step in understanding life after loss designed for those who have done some grief work and are ready to move forward. You may find that your old life doesn’t fit you anymore because you are a different person. In this series, participants will be challenged to understand the depth of their loss, engage in grief work, and build new identities. We provide an excellent opportunity for you to open this new chapter in your life by remembering the past and moving forward without regrets.

**Tuesdays, May 21, 28, June 4, 11
6:00 - 8:00 p.m**

Conference Room 0-850-2, Quality Services,
Aspirus Wausau Hospital

Most programs are free and open to the public.
Programs facilitated by Nan & Gary Zastrow,
Certified Grief Educators

Wings—a Grief Education Ministry –
providing grief education and support since 1993.
www.wingsgrief.org 715.845.4159



Other sponsors: Brainard Funeral Homes
Helke Funeral Home, Peterson Kraemer Funeral Homes

Be Good to Yourself

SELF CARE TIP

MAKING DECISIONS DURING GRIEF

When you are confused, it’s usually because you think you should do one thing and you want to do another. Making decisions during grief is complicated by the feelings of the heart. Our heart aches from loss; and sometimes that makes it difficult to “reason”. Important decisions can often wait. In most cases there is no hurry. You need the time to sort out what is best for you.

If important decisions must be made, rely on someone who has your best interests in mind and can help you make sound decisions on your behalf. However, don’t give up the right to be involved, whenever possible.

For those everyday decisions that still require making a choice, talk to yourself or write down on a paper what your options are. Pick the one you are most comfortable with. If there are no serious consequences to either choice, go with the choice that speaks to your heart.



Wings-a Grief Education Ministry has a presence on Facebook.

Here is a place to find Hope and Inspiration! Become a Friend. What you will find posted on our Facebook page:

- Inspirational quotes
- News about Events such as Support Groups, Community Seminars, Holiday programs, Grief Tips, and other educational experiences
- Shared posts that make the heart feel good

The Secret of Life

As the Lord God was creating the world,
he called upon the Archangels.

The Lord asked his Archangels to help him decide
where to put the Secret of Life.

“Bury it in the ground”
one angel replied.

“Put it on the bottom
of the sea,” said another.

“Hide it in a mountain,”
another suggested.

The Lord replied, “If I choose to do any of these
only a few will find the Secret of Life.
The Secret of Life must be accessible to EVERYONE.”

Then an angel replied, “I know put it in each man’s heart.
Nobody will think to look there.”

“Yes!” said the Lord.
“Within each man’s heart!”

And it was so.



**KEEP
CALM
AND
WRITE
POETRY**

*Would you like to share
your story or poem?*

If you would like to submit a short story, poem,
or article, we welcome it. The material does not need
to be original, but if it isn’t, please include the author
or credits that can be printed along with the material.
We are looking for articles that inspire the bereaved,
teach, and offer hope which is the focus of our
ministry of Wings-a Grief Education Ministry.
Poems or material may be submitted In memory
of your special loved one.

Reader Feedback



WHAT DO YOU THINK? JANUARY, 2019

IN EACH ISSUE, WE ASK OUR READERS TO SHARE THEIR RESPONSE TO A QUESTION THAT RELATES TO THEIR EXPERIENCES OR THOUGHTS ON A SPECIFIC SUBJECT. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS...JUST THOUGHTS. HOWEVER, SHARING YOUR EXPERIENCE CAN HELP OTHERS FIND HOPE AND KNOW THAT THEY ARE NOT ALONE.

WHAT GAVE YOU THE STRENGTH, FAITH, OR COURAGE TO HEAL YOUR GRIEF AFTER LOSS? ALMOST EVERYONE WHO HAS LOVED AND LIVED WELL AFTER THE DEATH OF A PRECIOUS LOVED ONE HAS A STORY TO TELL THAT EXPLAINS WHAT GAVE THEM THE DESIRE TO MOVE FORWARD. THIS MAY TAKE DIFFERENT FORMS OF MOTIVATION INCLUDING THE POWER OF FAITH, A GIFT OF ANGELS OR "SIGNS", A WISH TO CHAMPION A CAUSE, OR A DESIRE TO HELP OTHERS THROUGH SOME DIFFICULTY IN LIFE. WHAT IS YOUR STORY?

For me, it is a combination of factors. First, I must continue to push toward truth and justice with the murder of my son in China on April 14, 2005. The protocol must change.

Secondly, I went back to school for a second Master's Degree in Counseling and Psychology. Being a grief counselor, I have dedicated my life to providing free counseling for anyone in the military, their spouses and children. I also work very closely with other homicide survivors. It is shocking to see they too are up against the same awful protocols in dealing with their child's death overseas. Thirdly, I wanted to honor my son's memory in positive ways. To date, I have sent over 8,500 CARE packages to our military. I am blessed to have known hundreds and hundreds of fine men and women in the Armed Forces. I too believe I have been sent "angels". There are also constant signs (hearing Darren's favorite song - "I Hope You Dance" or seeing white rabbits (his Chinese name - Bai Tu).

I also have tremendous faith. I was in Temple shortly after Darren's murder. It was Yom Kippur. There was a book of remembrance naming those that had died

the past year. The Rabbi said, "I know many of you wish you were with your loved ones, but if you weren't here, who would honor their memory?"

That was profound to me. Lastly, I am training to do disaster relief/crisis response. I will be deployed with my therapy dog for natural disasters, shootings, etc.

I believe that Darren is in Heaven smiling down and saying, "You go mom!"

Maxine, North Hollywood

When my Mom died I was full grief. I thought maybe looking at pictures of her would help or maybe going to the cemetery or maybe even wearing her favorite robe would make me feel even just a little bit better. But none of those things made me feel as good as when I could talk to someone who would let me talk about her. And they would just listen as I rambled on about how great Mom was or about how her soup was always the best or even how her last days were. Sometimes all we need is a good listener.

Sherry, Merrill WI

I adored my father who passed away in 2013. The following year was tough; but my family and friends helped with my grief. I'd also received many signs of his presence along the way.

In 2016, I received the best sign from him to let me know he was still with me and knew what was going on in my life. I was driving my car and talking to him. I said, "Dad, should we move and build this new home?" (After 23 years in our first house, it was a scary and expensive venture). I then turned on the car radio and heard "A change will do you good." by Cheryl Crow. The next song was "Don't you worry about a thing" by Stevie Wonder. Wow, great answer. Thanks, dad!

Marjorie, Clarence Center, New York

When my mother died years ago and my Uncle Sig died the same week it was overwhelming for me. I had a special Aunt whom I called Tante Nuni. She died just a few months before them. Losing three family members made me experience all kinds of emotions that I was not acquainted with. I felt so alone and the God who I trusted all my life seemed not to be near.

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WHAT DO YOU THINK...

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At that time, although I did not realize what was happening, I was relying on my emotions and my feelings. It really didn't matter what people said to me. They often shared their experience how they were dealing with their grief, but this was my pain and my grief. I didn't want to have their experience. I wanted my own experience. I prayed and was very honest with God and told him that He had to come through for me by showing me that He was there. And, He did! Actually, He was there all the time, but I finally took the steps to healing.

I got back to reading my Bible and speaking to Him through prayer. Peace began to invade my body. It's so hard to explain; but, when God takes over you just know it. I began to think a little more clearly and eagerly accepted the kind words of others who were trying to encourage me. Some sent uplifting faith filled poetry. Some sent me music to listen to. Some friends just let me talk and share. They just listened and God was in all this. After all, He created the heavens and the earth and everything in it. He knows best what we need. The lessons I learned so many years ago are still with me. I am grateful to God and my friends who were very patient with me.

Rev. Liz, Chaplain Spiritual Care Support Ministries, Inc., Warrenton, VA

My husband died in 2010 after 5 years of Alzheimer's. We were as close as two human beings can get. Both of us clinicians, we worked together; so I lost my best friend, husband and colleague. I was devastated, felt the bottom had fallen out of my life, and didn't really want to go on, though I knew I would never take my own life.

One thing that made a huge difference was joining an online forum focused on grief support. This unique and caring

group truly made a huge difference. It is moderated by Marty Tousley, a very experienced former Hospice counselor, nurse and founder of the forum. (www.griefhealing.com) It is incredible. My close inner circle of friends also made a huge difference as did educating myself about grief, the latter in spite of being a therapist for many years.

Therapists, in my day, received no education about grief. I allowed myself to walk into my pain instead of running from it. I read everything I could get my hands on. I really worked hard at healing determined to help others when I was ready. It's now 9 years since Bill died and only last year did I really begin to feel that I had the energy and will to focus on my own health and life and interests. I was worn down after taking care of Bill for 5 years at home, got pneumonia annually for 8 years. This is my first year that I am pneumonia free. I took excellent care of myself in 2018. Today I look forward to pursuing a passion focused on spirituality and my rather contemplative life. It's been a long haul; but I did the journey well and that journey goes on.

Mary, Madison, WI

After my son died by suicide, I sunk into a deep depression myself. I knew I had other children who needed me, but I found myself mentally planning my own suicide. I didn't exactly want to die, but when it started to seem inevitable to me, I knew I was at great risk. I was hours away from checking myself into a mental health facility when my teenage daughter called me crying, asking me to pick her up from school right away. In that moment, something inside of me clicked and I knew that I wouldn't kill myself. I also started to believe, like I had before my son's death, that my role as a mother was valuable and that my surviving kids

really did need me. I wanted to heal so that I could be there for my them and so my son's death wouldn't be the beginning of the end of all of us.

Stephanie, Wausau, WI

My kids and grandkids were number one in giving me strength and courage after my husband died. I was constantly worried how they were doing; and, in turn, they were worried about me. We kept open communication and tried to check on each other weekly at first, then monthly (especially over the holidays and each anniversary date of his death). I kept in touch with my friends and family, too. I reached out for help to people who had lost a spouse when I needed it. I also tried to reach out to others when they lost someone. Some of this led to new friendships.

Ann, Wausau, WI

I lost my precious son in September 2000, one night before his 36th birthday. I lost my sister that morning to cancer and was consumed with her passing during the day. When I arrived at my son's place with his birthday dinner in tow, I discovered he died. I was traumatized. The next week of funerals and arrangements seem like a blur. All I knew was that I had no "inner spirit" and felt like my entire core was missing.

When I looked in the mirror, I was surprised to see that my body was intact because emotionally my center was completely hollow. Being forced to return to work several days later, I couldn't concentrate, felt numb, and wasn't sure I could keep a job where I had to smile and be smart. But I endured those first months, thanks to a TV program I found

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WHAT DO YOU THINK...

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while changing channels one night. It was called "Crossing Over" with John Edward. He communicated with the souls of those who had passed over to Heaven. I could not get enough of his program because he made me believe that

our loved ones aren't "gone." They've simply left their worldly body and passed over to God's spiritual world. They still know we exist and could possibly be with us every day. I still miss my son enormously but know he's in a safe place now

in God's loving arms. Every Sunday I light a candle at church and ask the Lord to wrap his loving arms around my son now that he's safely back home with him in Heaven. This is very consoling to me.

Betty, Wausau, WI

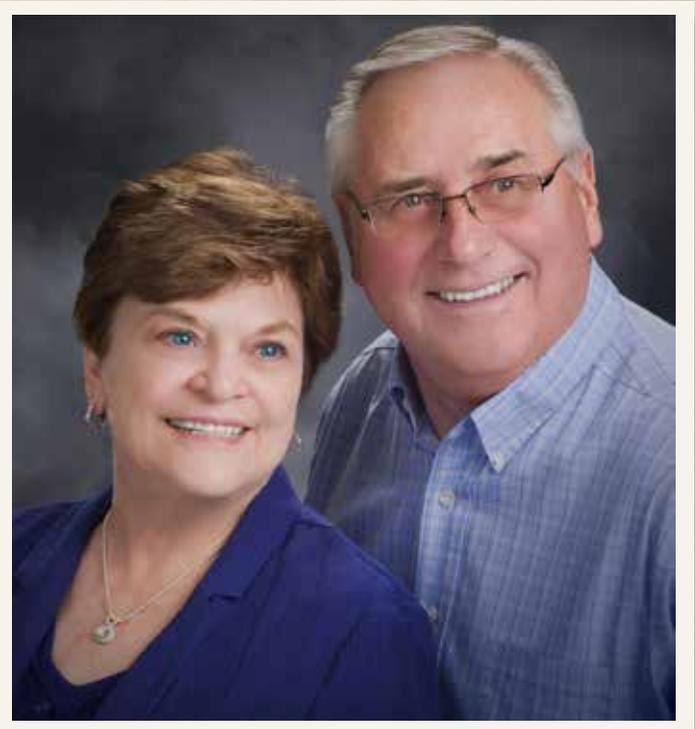
The Volunteers of Wings...

NAN & GARY ZASTROW Founders of Wings - Established 1993 In Loving Memory of son, Chad Zastrow

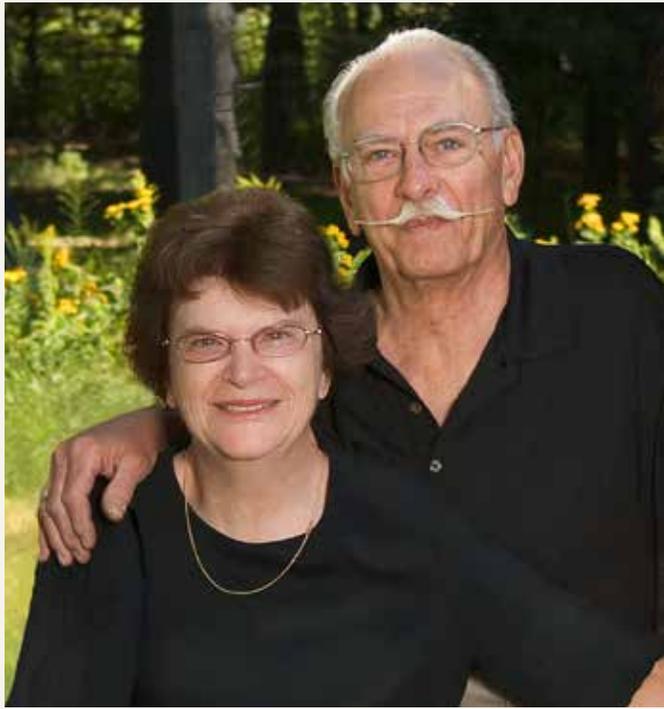
Nan & Gary formed the non-profit organization in 1993 after the death of their son, Chad, and his fiancé Jenny, ten weeks later. Both deaths were the result of suicide; and at the time, suicide was very taboo.

This became an incentive for Nan and Gary to talk about death and grief. Wings began as a small magazine that shared stories, memories, poems and inspiration to others. The magazine helped heal their pain, too. This extraordinary organization has grown and spread hope across the United States, Canada and even to some foreign countries.

Today, it continues with support groups, an online eLetter, seminars, workshops and education and training. Nan says, "Our volunteers serve with a heart."



Nan and Gary have a daughter with special needs. They spent many years building spec homes and new homes for themselves. They are involved in Prevent Suicide Marathon County, had full-time careers in the community, and enjoy some travel, flower gardening, and outdoor activities.



Sally and Clarence “Ole” Johnson

Volunteers since 1993

In Loving Memory of nephew, Chad Zastrow

Sally and Ole became instant volunteers. Chad Zastrow was their nephew, and their close family ties with Nan & Gary created their desire to walk through this journey with them. They have had various losses in their lives.

Sally and Ole, now retired from their careers, spend their time camping, golfing, and savor their time at their cabin, north of Wausau. Ole has a locksmith business. Sally quilts, gardens, and volunteers. They also spend time with their daughter, Jennifer, and grandchildren, Dustin and Paige and new great-grandchild, Walker.

They have been volunteers for many organizations including scouting, church commitments, library, community, and Ole was a volunteer fire fighter.

ZOFIA & GENE LESZCZYNSKI

Volunteers since June, 1994

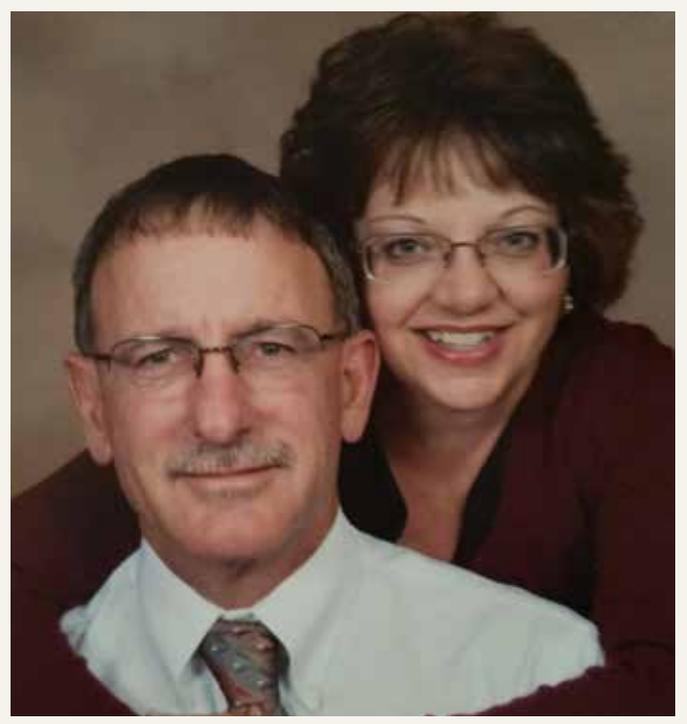
In Loving Memory of son, Kevin Leszczynski

Gene and Zofia’s son, Kevin, died at the age of 21.

They admit they felt lost and unaware when they began the most difficult journey of their lives.

They received a complimentary issue of the Wings magazine in the mail—and immediately felt connected to someone who could relate to what they were feeling at the time. Zofia and Gene met with Nan and Gary days later. As they visited, a severe summer storm came up and all the power went out. They huddled around a candle, in the dark, and talked for hours about their loss. Nan recalls this “meeting” on page 85 in the book, *Blessed Are They That Mourn*. Zofia & Gene are active with The Compassionate Friends, enjoy traveling, and domestic activities like gardening and canning.





JOHN GLYNN & KATHY ABT-GLYNN

Volunteers since 1999

In Loving Memory of daughter, Kayla

Kathy began her volunteer work with Wings in January 1999. Kathy's daughter, Kayla, died as the result of a tragic accident in 1997. After attending a class facilitated by Nan & Gary through Wings in 1998, Kathy found that that the new path she wanted in life was to help and support others who also experienced a loss.

In 1999, Kathy married John Glynn and John joined Kathy in volunteering for Wings. John works in education in the community. Their combined families include six children and 3 grandchildren. Their lives are busy; but, in their free time, they enjoy gardening, camping and other outdoor activities.

Mark & Judi Brost

Volunteers since 2011

In Loving Memory of daughter, Erin

Mark and Judi Brost, originally from Green Bay and Madison, both came to Wausau for their jobs in 1979.

They met and married and lived in Wausau since that time. In 2009, their daughter Erin died at the age of 25 as a result of addiction. Having heard about the Wings

organization many years earlier, they contacted Nan and Gary and began attending the Wings programs. Not only did they gain much needed education and support from Wings, but now, as volunteers, have found some true friends in the Wings family. They feel honored to be able assist the organization in any way possible.

In addition to their daughter Erin, they have a son,

Matthew, who lives in Seattle. Mark and Judi are retired and reside part-time in Arizona; but continue to volunteer for Wings. They enjoy traveling, hiking, and outdoor activities.



22nd Annual

Understanding Grief Spring Seminar 2019

Ted Bowman

Ted Bowman is an educator, author and consultant who specializes in change and transition, whether it occurs in families, an organization, or the community. His emphasis is on aiding people in utilizing their strengths and the resources of others in facing change and transition.

Bowman teaches a graduate course on grief and loss at the University of Saint Thomas. He was Senior Trainer for the Wilder Foundation in St. Paul. In addition, Ted taught Family Education courses at the University of Minnesota, was on the faculty of the National Center for Family Literacy in Louisville, Kentucky and the United Theological Seminary.

Ted Bowman has published extensively, has served on many boards both local and national, and has received a number of awards for his service.



SEMINAR ONE

Shattered Dreams, Resiliency – Finding Hope

A community seminar for grief, healing and hope

Thursday, April 4, 2019 | 7:00 – 9:00 pm

Complimentary public grief seminar. No charge.

Registration not required. Offers 2 CEUs-DSPS

Life rarely happens as desired or planned. Detours and surprises are the stuff of living. While many such detours are disappointing, others shatter dreams and can throw people off their usual resilient responses. Unexpected medical or mental health diagnoses, family tensions, miscarriage, loss of job and divorce are but a few examples. In order for many to move forward, we must grieve lost expectations in order to dream new dreams and create new plans. In this session, participants will be presented with frameworks and tools for understanding and responding to shattered dreams.

Both seminars will be held at:

Holiday Inn & Suites – Cedar Creek
1000 Imperial Avenue, Rothschild, WI

For more information or a program brochure contact:

Wings—a Grief Education Ministry

Nan or Gary Zastrow 715.845.4159 or wings1@charter.net

Or Aspirus Comfort Care and Hospice Services

Amy Kitsemel 715.847.2703

Professional CEU's approved by WI DSPS for both programs.

SEMINAR TWO

Grief and Hope in Life's Intersections: Multiple Responses to Immediate and Chronic Sorrow

A seminar that explores grief and compassionate bereavement support

Friday, April 5, 2019 | 9:00 am – Noon | Fee: \$50

Open to the Public. Registration required online or at the door.

Offers 3 CEUs-DSPS

Compassionate and skillful practitioners must be adaptive to do their work well. Not only are the situations of disruptive changes, illness, dying and death widely variable, the ways people grieve are many. Further, families are rarely dealing with one thing at a time. Even as dying is occurring, someone else may have lost a job, be receiving addiction treatment, moving to a new house, or giving birth.

In this experiential workshop, the best of palliative and grief caring for a wide range of presenting behaviors will be addressed. Attention will also be given the well-being of the practitioner.

Presented by:

Wings
A Grief Education Ministry

Partner sponsor:


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Passion for excellence.
Compassion for people.

Presented by Wings™—a Grief Education Ministry who partners with Aspirus Comfort Care & Hospice Services to provide these seminars as a community service. Other major sponsors include Brainard Funeral Home & Cremation Centers, Helke Funeral Home & Cremation Services, and Peterson/Kraemer Funeral Homes & Crematory. For a complete list of sponsors, visit www.wingsgrief.org